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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 002088

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STATE FOR EUR/SCE AND EUR/AGS - SAINT ANDRE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2016

TAGS: PREL PGOV BK

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO AUSTRIA ON SUPPORTING CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM IN BOSNIA

REF: STATE 113492

Classified By: A/DCM Gregory E. Phillips. Reason: 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) A/DCM presented reftel points on July 12 to Thomas Schnoell, the Austrian MFA's acting assistant secretary-level director for Central and Eastern Europe.

¶2. (C) Schnoell agreed with our points, and undertook to seek opportunities for Austrian officials to make public expressions of support for the constitutional reform process in Bosnia. He noted that parliamentarians were independent-minded, and said it was difficult to shape their actions, but agreed that it was important to persuade them to avoid actions which would have a negative impact on the Bosnian election process.

¶3. (C) Schnoell said the failure of the reform package in the Bosnian parliament had been a disappointment. One problem, he said, had been the insufficient engagement of the EU Special Representative. The Special Representative would have to have a larger role as the reform process moved along.

During the negotiation of Bosnia's Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU, it would become clear to the Bosnians that their state institutions are too weak, and they would have to make reforms. Outside engagement -- even pressure -- would be important in helping them to take the necessary steps.

¶4. (C) The issue of maintaining the engagement of international actors would be important, especially as the UN High Representative's role diminished in favor of that of the EU Special Representative. Schnoell said. If the election process went well, he said, the transition from the UN High Representative to the EU Special Representative could take place in the first half of 2007. The question would be how to continue the institutional involvement of non-EU actors, such as the U.S., Japan, and others.

McCaw